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**For Immediate Release:
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MAYOR UPHOLDS FREEDOM OF SPEECH RIGHTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CITY'S NEW ACCESS ORDINANCE LEGISLATION

HARTFORD, CT – Last night the Court of Common Council passed an Access Ordinance that allows individuals to protest on city-affiliated property as evident in the United States Constitution, the Constitution of the State of Connecticut, and various State and Federal Court cases. Its provisions also protect businesses against protestors exercising their constitutional rights on city-affiliated property, by designating them to assigned areas and away from business areas of the establishment.

The Mayor is pleased with the balance struck with the ordinance passed by the Council and the hard work of the Council members, Corporation Counsel, and concerned citizens all of whom worked together to ensure that the best possible law was passed.

"I am proud to be a part of passing this important piece of legislation. This ordinance upholds the First Amendment and at the same time protecting businesses. The passage of this ordinance lets investors in the City know that we will protect their rights to conduct business safely in our city, and it lets individuals know that this City values Freedom of Speech and of Assembly," stated Mayor Perez.

This ordinance, originally introduced in August, has undergone several revisions to ensure that an effective balance between individual civil rights and the interest of businesses looking to invest in the City are upheld. This ordinance was an effective compromise that is consistent with federal court rulings which gives citizens access to public land as guaranteed by law in a way that protects the rights of businesses to engage in business.

The ordinance applies only to retail establishments located on city-affiliated property and requires that any parties seeking to demonstrate on city-affiliated property **give 24 hour notice to police, post a bond with the city to cover any damages that might occur to the property, and limit their assembly to an area designated by police.** These provisions keep assemblers out of all businesses areas of an establishment, including sidewalks and traffic areas.